

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 11-19, 21 and 21-26 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1-4, 11-19, 21 and 21-26¹ presently stand rejected.

Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-4, 11-19, 21, 25 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Balch et al. (6,479,301).

Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended to recite a system including the apparatus and an array of samples, the samples of the array of samples *being provided in an arbitrary pattern*; and that the image recorder records *at least a portion of the arbitrary pattern of the array of samples* and the position. This amendment is supported at least by the exemplary system shown in FIG. 1, which includes an array 100 and the exemplary array shown in FIG. 3A, in which a mixture of proteins is provided on membrane 102 in an arbitrary pattern.² Because the positions of the samples are an arbitrary pattern, an image recorder is necessary determine the position of a sample relative to the other samples.

Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of independent claim 1 at least because Balch does not disclose this claimed system.

As shown in FIG. 4 of Balch, the array of samples in Balch is constituted by the array of wells of a standard 96 well microtiter plate. Hence, the positions of the samples in Balch's array

¹ On the Office Action Summary, the Examiner has incorrectly indicated that claims 1-26 are rejected.

² See specification at page 12, lines 10-24.

are previously determined and are not provided in an arbitrary pattern. Therefore, an image recorder for determining the positions of the samples in the array of samples *is not necessary in Balch*.

Thus, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of independent claim 1.

In addition, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of dependent claims 2-4, 11-19, 21 and 21-26 at least because of their dependency from claim 1.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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